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A

P O E M

TO THE

M E M O R Y

OF

THE CELEBRATED

Mrs. C I B B E R. K

—*Sidereæ Raptus lugebat Alumne.*

CLAUD. de Rap. Prof. Lib. iii.



L O N D O N :

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P O E M

M E O R Y

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A
P O E M
TO THE
M E M O R Y
O F

The CELEBRATED Mrs. CIBBER.

WHAT Form is that, which on the mould'ring Heaps
Of Earth, upturn'd from yonder new-made Grave,
In this dim Cloister painful Vigils keeps,
And by distracted Gestures seems to rave?

The Sexton's Lamp still glimmers on the Ground;
Close at her Side the Axe and Spade are thrown,
And many a human Bone lies scatter'd round,
The nameless Reliques of a Race unknown!

Long

'Long is her fable Robe, and veil'd her Face;
Up to the vaulted Roof her Groan ascends ;
Now something in the Dust she seems to trace,
Now o'er the Sepulchre dejected bends.

" Say, thou sequester'd Mourner, whence thy Woe?
" Whence, I exclaim, those Signs of deep-felt Grief?
" Why thus the chearful Haunts of Life forego?
" Why in these lonely Mansions seek Relief?

" Ask you, she cries, the Cause of my Despair?
" Will not this Scene the fatal Story tell?
" Mark where yon Train sad Obsequies prepare!
" Hear you the Summons of that pausing Bell?

" It calls my CIBBER to her House of Clay,
" She, who the Passions can no more engage,
" Rich in Theatric Glory, snatch'd away,
" The darling Daughter of the BRITISH Stage.

" She

“ She comes, my JULIET comes---O dire Divorce !
 “ Torn from my Arms by Heav’n’s resistless Doom.—
 “ A JULIET chang’d indeed !---a real Corse !
 “ And borne lamented to a real Tomb !”

I turn, and while my Eye the Cloister roves,
 The flaring Tapers pour upon my Sight ;
 Solemn and slow the black Procession moves,
 And darts a Terror thro’ the Gloom of Night.

Sorrowing, I see the holy Rites begin ;
 Refign’d, the sad sepulchral Office hear :
 A thousand soft Ideas stir within,
 And ask once more the tributary Tear.

But when the sable Pall aside was flung,
 Who can this Mourner’s seeming Anguish tell !
 As o’er the Margin of the Grave she hung,
 That soon must close on one she lov’d so well !

Eager

Eager she seem'd to catch a parting Look,
 Fix'd in expressive Silence o'er the Dead :
 Then sighing deep, the dreary Spot forsook,
 And thro' the monumental Region fled.

“ Might I, thou gen'rous Friend, that Face behold !
 “ Can'st thou a Partner in thy Tears refuse ?
 “ Can'st thou---” but while her Robe I strove to hold,
 Her falling Veil disclos'd THE TRAGIC MUSE.

“ Divine MELPOMENE ! art thou I cry'd,
 “ From Fancy's Regions come this Train to join ?
 “ Tut'refs of virtuous Grief, why seek to hide
 “ Sorrows, which claim Preeminence o'er mine ?

“ Yes, she reply'd, from happier Realms I came,
 “ To see my CIBBER laid in hallow'd Rest ;
 “ By her, while living, I increas'd my Fame,
 “ By her, secur'd my Empire in the Breast.

“ Still

“ Still must my Thoughts the plaintive Theme pursue,
 “ Still in my Mind her fond Remembrance spring ;
 “ Now all her wond’rous Pow’rs rise fresh to View,
 “ And only sharper point Affliction’s Sting !

“ Clos’d are those Eyes which knew each vary’d Art,
 “ And could my Meaning with such Force inspire ;
 “ Call Tears of Pity from the melting Heart,
 “ Freeze with wild Horror, or with Rapture fire !

“ By Death’s cold Hand those Features now are bound,
 “ That once could ev’ry Change of Passion wear !
 “ Mute is that Voice, whose more than magic Sound
 “ Stole like soft Music on the ravish’d Ear !

“ And fix’d those Limbs in fun’ral Weeds array’d,
 “ Us’d to the study’d Elegance of Dress,
 “ That ev’ry graceful Attitude display’d,
 “ Great as these circling, sculptur’d Forms express !—
 “ Who

“ Who can like her the haughty PYRRHUS bend ?

“ Or in the Wife of faithless JAFFIER melt ?

“ Such filial Softness to CORDELIA lend ?

“ Or shew the Struggles wretched CONSTANCE felt ?

“ How shall the false CALISTA weep her Fate ?

“ Or poor deceiv'd MONIMIA now complain ?

“ Who, ISABELLA, can thy Woes relate ?

“ Or paint the Tortures of ALICIA's Brain ?---

“ O gentle CIBBER ! long thy Loss I'll mourn ;

“ And many a time, by strong Affection led,

“ To this lone Place at silent Night return,

“ And o'er thy Dust ambrosial Odours shed !---

“ Yet am I not of ev'ry Hope bereft ;

“ Nor stifled in the Tomb my Taper dies ;

“ Still to relume the Blaze a PRITCHARD's left,

“ Whose Breath shall send it flaming to the Skies.

“ She

“ She can to Nature urge the just Appeal ;
 “ Genius and Judgment both in her are seen ;
 “ She thro’ the Heart’s deep Windings makes us feel,
 “ And adds new Grandeur to the swelling Scene.

“ But while exulting, thus her Pow’rs I praise,
 “ My SPORTIVE SISTER is a Rival there ;
 “ Too frequent from my solemn Path she strays,
 “ And gives the pert Ufurper half her Care !---

“ O may she long retain her wonted Fire!--
 “ For should’st thou GARRICK still my Suit refuse,
 “ And from the Stage replete with Fame retire,
 “ Who shall support the drooping TRAGIC MUSE ? ”

T H E E N D.

"She can no longer urge the full Appeal;

"Grief and Judgment both are lost and lean;

"She thro' the thick'ning deep, with long, unceasing strain,

"And adds new Griefs to the fulling strain.

"But what avails this?—how her Power is vain!

"My Story now, Sir, is a Real thing;

"Too frequent from my solemn Faith the things,

"And gives the best of what she can say—

"O may I never more be found to say—

"For should I then Grief on all my Sins rehearse,

"And from the Lord with Tears rehearse,

"How shall I hope to see His face?"



THE END.

Sto. L. 34.
1-9.